

# Boys & Girls Club to close at month's end



The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

**CLOSING:** The board of the Boys & Girls Club of Hot Springs on Friday announced its intention to close the club at the end of the month.

MARK GREGORY  
*Editor*

The board of directors of the Boys & Girls Club of Hot Springs said Friday the club will close at month's end after 75 years in operation, following notice from Boys & Girls Clubs of America that it would revoke the local charter at the end of February.

In a letter titled "To the Community of Hot Springs" emailed Friday to the newspaper, the board said the Hot Springs Family YMCA, located on Werner Street, has committed to run the spring baseball program on the Boys & Girls Club's baseball fields, will provide after-school care, and has expressed interest in taking control of the club and its facilities.

"However, the YMCA will perform a thorough due diligence process before a firm commitment will be considered,"

said the letter, which was drafted in coordination with the YMCA.

A rally to save the Boys & Girls Club will take place at the club, 109 W. Belding St., from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. today, according to James C. Lowery, executive director of Community Empowerment Network of Hot Springs.

"Concerned Citizens will not allow this closing of the Boys and Girls Club without a fight. We are bring (sic) together as many people as we can from our Community that support the Boys and Girls Club to remain open under the charter of the Boys and Girls Club Of America," Lowery said in an email to the newspaper announcing the event.

The letter from the club's board, which was also distributed to parents and members, said it met Feb. 7 and voted to

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## Rush hour snarls draw attention

DAVID SHOWERS  
*The Sentinel-Record*

The anecdotal piece of the Arkansas Department of Transportation planning study considering improvements to four King Expressway interchanges and a busy stretch of Central Avenue concluded this week.

Comments offered by local officials and the public will be among the many data points used to model potential solutions to congestion and safety issues along the expressway corridor from the Albert Pike Road and Central Avenue interchanges and Central Avenue from the expressway to Higdon Ferry Road.

The comments help the transportation department and its consultants understand traffic problems along both corridors. Chief among them is the queue that extends onto the westbound shoulder of the expressway at the Airport Road interchange during rush hour.

Traffic waiting to turn left onto Airport Road spills into the expressway. The congestion is compounded by Airport Road traffic waiting to turning left onto the expressway, as it blocks expressway traffic from turning west onto Airport Road.

With a growing percentage of Garland County's populace

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The Sentinel-Record/Grace Brown

**MAPPING IT OUT:** County Judge Rick Davis, right, expresses his concerns about safety issues at the Airport Road-King Expressway interchange Tuesday at Transportation Depot to Travis Brooks of the Arkansas Department of Transportation.

## Mueller indicts 13 Russians

ERIC TUCKER  
*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — In an extraordinary indictment, the U.S. special counsel accused 13 Russians Friday of an elaborate plot to disrupt the 2016 presidential election, charging them with running a huge but hidden social media trolling campaign aimed in part at helping Republican Donald Trump defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton.

The federal indictment, brought by special counsel Robert Mueller,

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## FBI says it failed to investigate tip on Florida shooting suspect

KELLI KENNEDY  
CURT ANDERSON  
TAMARA LUSH  
*The Associated Press*

PARKLAND, Fla. — The FBI received a tip last month that the suspect in the Florida school shooting had a "desire to kill" and access to guns and could be plotting an attack, but agents failed to investigate, the agency said Friday. Florida Gov. Rick Scott called for the FBI's director to resign because of the missteps.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions said the shooting that killed 17 people Wednesday was a "tragic consequence" of the FBI's failure and ordered a review of the Justice Department's processes. He said it's now clear that the nation's premier law enforcement agency missed warning signs.

In more evidence that there had been signs of trouble with the suspect, Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a Friday news conference that his office had received more than 20 calls about Nikolas Cruz in the past few years.

A person close to Cruz called the FBI's tip line on Jan. 5 and provided information about Cruz's weapons and his erratic behavior, including his disturbing social media posts. The caller was concerned that Cruz could attack a school.

In a statement, the agency acknowledged that the tip should have been shared with the FBI's Miami office and investigated, but it was not. The startling admission came as the agency was already facing criticism for its treatment of a tip about a YouTube comment posted last year. The comment posted by a "Nikolas Cruz" said, "Im going to be a professional school shooter."

The FBI investigated the remark but did not determine who made it.

The 19-year-old Cruz has been charged with killing 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, north of Miami.

FBI Director Christopher

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The Associated Press

**OVERCOME:** Maria Creed is overcome with emotion Friday as she crouches in front of one of the memorial crosses that were placed at Pine Trails Park in Parkland, Fla., for the victims of the Wednesday shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Creed's son, Michael Creed, is a sophomore at the school.



The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

**SPREADING AWARENESS** Lake Hamilton High School seniors Ariel Albo, left, and Bridgette Thompson completed a project called Sister Operation to bring awareness to live organ donation. The project was done to honor Thompson's sister, and their late instructor, Sherree Hughes. Both students are Medical Professions Education II students at National Park Technology Center.

## Students shed light on organ donation

BETH REED  
*The Sentinel-Record*

PEARCY — Two Lake Hamilton High School seniors are working to raise awareness about live organ donation.

Bridgette Thompson and Ariel Albo, both Medical Professions Education II students at National Park Technology Center, were inspired not only by Thompson's sister, who is currently waiting a kidney transplant, but their late instructor, Sherree Hughes.

"We did this for my sister, and for all the people who don't know that you can still live and give an organ," Thompson said.

The students presented research on live organ donation, in a project called Sister Operation, to their classmates on Friday. They will present their findings at an upcoming Health Occupations Students of America competition in March.

Melony Ritter, communications director for National Park College, said it was obvious watching the students present their project that a spark has ignited their passion.

"We try to provide our students with opportunities to connect what they learn in the classroom to real life scenarios," Ritter said. "It is always moving to watch how they grow and mature in their specialties and many of our NPTC students discover a real passion for their field of study during their time here.

"Others learn their talents are better focused in another field, but the advantage is they learn that early and don't waste time and money following a path that isn't a good fit for them."

The students said they researched the statistics on live donation, with help from Hughes, and with this knowledge they hope to education others about being an organ donor.

"We looked up a lot of the statistics, especially about those who give and need transplants," Albo said. "We just want everybody to be aware that you're able to do live donations and still live your life normally."

According to the students' findings, 20 people die each day waiting for a transplant, and a registered organ donor can save as many as eight lives.

"Every 10 minutes, someone is added to the transplant list," Albo said. "And it's not just kidneys. It's pancreas, it's bone marrow, blood, anything."

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, the organization contracted by the federal government to manage the nation's organ transplant system, there are currently more than 117,000 people in the U.S. waiting for transplants. Eighty-one percent of these individuals are in need of a kidney.

One thing that stood out in their research, the students said, were the

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